1: Cohen E-4,5 (1956-1965) 1967 MS14 Kanuri MS14

holding this title had very few of these offices left—they were now the rights of persons holding quite different titles.

The economy of Bornu was a semi-specialized one. Almost everyone grew some crops, except a few cattle nomads, but at the same time during the long dry season people carried on craftwork, trade, and other specialized activities, such as providing medical or barbering services, or entertainment for those who were willing to pay. Everyone had access to new land, over which a person might establish ownership by his act of clearing it. If he used the land for only a few years, and stopped, then the land passed back into bush with no owner. Continued long-term use, especially that involving inheritance, meant that the owner could do with it what he pleased and transfer it to whomever he pleased. In other words the Kanuri had property concepts of usufruct or use-right, but they also had notions of freehold or private property in which land could be transferred by an individual after he had used it for a long time, or it had been passed on to his heirs.

The people raised specialized crops in the kingdom and practiced a myriad of different crafts. Each local craft was organized into a craft guild that helped set production and price standards under a local craft leader who benefited economically from his position and tried to pass it down through the male line. Markets, too, were under headmen and all goods to be traded went to weekly markets to which came thousands of people from the surrounding area.

Trade was accomplished by barter for the most part, although several forms of currency developed, which can be called special purpose or limited purpose money. For various kinds of trade, and within limits, certain objects—a man's robe, iron bars, slaves, horses, cotton rolls, Maria Theresa dollars, and other items—could be used. The trans-Saharan trader came to Bornu for slaves; he therefore demanded payment in slaves, and slaves became a kind of currency for this trade. People from Bornu traded south of Lake Chad for iron bars. These bars could be used to purchase anything in the markets southeast of Bornu where they were the chief export commodity. The same thing is true of cloth in the southern areas of Bornu where it was manufactured and where it was a major export item. Cloth rolls purchased any number of commodities from Bornu but only in that north-south trade. Cowrie shells came very late to Bornu (1820–1850) and never achieved the success as currency that they did elsewhere.

Another and important method of distribution of goods was carried out within the political system itself. Political superiors gave out enormous quantities of cloth, food, horses, and robes on particular holy days or special events such as rites of passage, or wrestling matches. On one occasion a witness in the early part of the century watched the Shehu give away more than a thousand men's robes and an equal number of bullocks and sheep. Although one would expect the leaders to give more than other men, they also served as a model for the population so that the amount of distribution actually carried on in this way must have been very great indeed.

Another important facet of the economy was foreign trade. Although the famous trans-Saharan caravans are supposed to have declined during the nineteenth century, by all accounts they were still of considerable importance for Bornu. Into Bornu came calico, cotton prints, fine silk, sword blades, writing paper, looking glasses, needles, razors, scissors, knives, cheap jewelry, and guns mostly from Eu-

1: Cohen E-4,5 (1956-1965) 1967 MS14 Kanuri MS14

rope. From North African manufacturers came cloaks, shawls, red felt and embroidered hats for men, sashes, trousers, carpets, religious books, spices, perfumes, and later, cowrie shells. From the desert came tobacco, barley, wild rice, dates, salt, natron, camels, and various assorted medicines, especially *drupa,* a herb believed to induce fertility in women. In return Bornu sent back sewn cloth, hides, leatherwork, sandals, feathers, ivory, gum arabic, Korans, kola nuts, and, above all, slaves. Caravans were large, and the trip was long, arduous, and dangerous because of the desert and its marauding inhabitants. However, just how important foreign trade was in the area is difficult to assess. The ordinary man probably used very little of outside manufacture, but at the capital such goods were considered necessities for people having any pretentions to higher status in the kingdom.

The Colonial Change

Using this description of pre-colonial Bornu it is now possible to discuss the kind of changes that were brought into the area by the inception of British rule at the beginning of the twentieth century. The British came to Bornu in 1901, after it had been occupied for seven years by Rabeh who had been intent on making himself the founder of its third dynasty. The British had not only to bring Bornu under the Northern Nigerian Government but to resuscitate its leaders who had not been in control of the area since 1893. At first they simply left the Shehu to do as he pleased, with the exception of waging war and carrying on the slave trade, which they vigorously put down. However, the idea of fiefs being ruled by lords at the capital seemed grossly inefficient, and they soon ordered that the Shehu choose his best fief-holders and that these be sent out to the locality of their fiefs to govern. Furthermore they decided to consolidate numbers of fiefs into larger units which they now called districts. There followed a tussle between the British and the Kanuri over how many village areas and how many districts there were going to be, the British generally trying to limit the number while the Shehu and his advisers generally tried to increase them. Finally a number around twenty was worked out for the districts and then village areas were incorporated into them. In general these village areas approximate the size and location of former fiefs. However the Kanuri felt that the head of a district was like a titled, local, territorial chief of the nineteenth century who has control over a large number of settlements, so he was called *ajia,* which translates today as a district head. Under him were heads of village areas that included a number of satellite settlements—and this village area head was—like the *ajia,* appointed and turbaned by the Shehu. He was therefore called a lawan (village area head) as was the titled head of a settlement with satellites during the nineteenth century. The difference, however, was that now there was no fief-holder or his representative to whom the local headmen were accountable. The district head held his office directly under the Shehu and the village area heads were directly under the district head. Small wards and hamlets were now headed up by bullama and the term for a bullama's subordinate, the mbarma, fell into disuse and has now almost disappeared.

The mode of appointing and maintaining these jobs led to problems which were never really solved. The Shehu put up names for the district heads who be-

1: Cohen E-4,5 (1956-1965) 1967 MS14 Kanuri MS14

farm. If Kachella Abba were to leave Magumeri, Monadu feels he would move with him. This would not impair his relationship to the salt supplier since that man lives in Maiduguri where he would still have to go to obtain wholesale salt. He says Kachella Abba is his "father" and he would and must serve him and give him respect even though the two men are nearly the same age.

BUKAR, THE "TADA NJIMA" Another example of retailing that shows how it is often imbedded into a more general relationship is that of Bukar. Bukar can be seen three or four days a week walking about the village of Magumeri with a tin of cellophane-wrapped candies. One of the village's household heads goes in and out of the city regularly on messages for the native administration. When in the city he buys a tin or two of candy and brings these back to Magumeri. The boy, Bukar, is about twenty years old; he is not related by descent or marriage to the senior man but lives in his compound and is fed and clothed by the household head. When the senior rides horseback in ceremonies the boy carries his spear and walks behind the horse; he gathers grass for the horse, runs messages for the household head, carries water for the household, and works on the household farm-plots. Receipts from the candy sale are given to the household head who then gives Bukar a small amount for himself. Here the retailing of candy is only one aspect of the relationship between Bukar and his household head. He refers to his superior, the household head, as *abba njima* or father of the house, and says of him, "He is just like my father."

AJIMI, THE KOLA NUT SELLER Next we see a wholesaler who sells directly to retailers in an ancient trade that has always allowed for middlemen by the score because of the vast distances over which it is carried out. Ajimi is a young man of twenty-five or twenty-six who lives with his brothers in a small hamlet just outside Magumeri. For the six to nine months a year when farming is slack, and intermittently while he is farming, Ajimi sells kola nuts to local retailers. Ajimi gets the money from his father's older brother in the city and then buys a *kwando*, a large rope wrapped package of nuts. A kwando costs about sixty to seventy dollars and contains roughly 7000 to 8000 nuts. He buys the nuts from traders in the city who ship them into Maiduguri from other parts of Nigeria and West Africa.

Ajimi visits three or four of these traders regularly about twice a month in the dry season. He always goes to all of them, inspects their goods, talks prices, and then decides where to place his order. He does this for two reasons. First there is always some variety in price and quality and he must try to get the best he can of both. Secondly, by going to these same suppliers, among dozens of possible ones, he feels he can build up their confidence in him by selling his stuff well and steadily. Indeed, several of the suppliers have on occasion given him an extra kwando on credit and he kept the profits for himself.

Generally Ajimi brings the nuts back in time for Magumeri Sunday market and attends the Thursday and Monday markets as well at nearby towns. He can sell a kwando to retailers in about two weeks and make a profit of about thirty dollars, half of which he gives to his father's older brother who supplied the original money. Thus he makes about fifteen dollars for two weeks of wholesaling—if he is lucky and sagacious in his relations to retailers. Retailers can go to several suppliers like Ajimi. They decide on the basis of quality of the nuts, on the price, and whether they can obtain credit when they need it. The most flexible and negotiable of these is credit, and Ajimi has his most difficult time trying to compete on this

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level and still make a profit. He will not give credit to strangers, but must have done business with the man successfully or have some previous knowledge of him, his family, his agnates, or any one else who would be responsible for him if he were taken into court for a bad debt. Nevertheless, with each retailer taking about two to four dollars worth of nuts it takes only a few bad debts to whittle away his fifteen dollar profit into a loss, and he has had a number of these on which it took several later trips to recoup his losses. Ajimi, however, is very philosophical and entertains his friends for hours telling stories about his bad debts to point up the moral that a kola nut seller's life is not a happy one.

AJIMI'S UNCLE Finally let us look at Ajimi's uncle, his father's older brother who lives in the city and runs, because of his access to liquid capital, a relatively large trading organization along traditional lines.

Ajimi's uncle is a man of fifty-five years who has three wives and a concubine as well as a son and a younger brother's son living in his large compound in Maiduguri. He generally has several *tada njima* living in the compound, and in the near vicinity are those of his other married *tada njima* who are part of his organization.

His mode of operation is fairly simple; he gives out money to men like Ajimi to trade with, and then takes one half or more of the profits. Some of these men are connected by kinship to the uncle; others, indeed most of them, are not. Those who are not, start out in his compound as low status *tada njima;* they carry water, cut grass for the horses, run messages, and so on. For this they receive their food, shelter, clothing, and a little pocket money. If over a period of one to two years they prove respectable and trustworthy, Ajimi's uncle gives them some money and sends them out to trade, usually with someone more experienced at first, then on their own. The following list indicates both the range and number of his enterprises:

1. Two men buy millet in Geidam for sale in Maiduguri going to the Geidam market once every week or two.
2. One man sells cloth in Damasac. The cloth is supplied to him by Ajimi's uncle who buys it in larger quantities for sale in several places. This same man is given money to buy onions and ship them to Damasac where they are scarce and high priced.
3. One man buys fish at Abadan on Lake Chad and sells it in Maiduguri.
4. Another man buys natron in Bama (to the southeast of Bornu) for sale in Maiduguri.
5. Several (from one to three) buy cattle in Bornu and sell them in Kano.
6. Several (one to three) buy cattle in Bornu and sell them in Makurdi.
7. One man purchases butter in Damaturu (Fulani country) and sells it in Maiduguri.
8. One (Ajimi) sells kola nuts in Magumeri and used to buy ground-nuts for sale in the capital.

The organization involves anywhere from eleven to sixteen men (the number varies over time) and their families, and probably involves a turnover of about $1200 to $1500 per month with a maximum profit margin of anywhere from thirty to forty percent on the investment. By Bornu standards Ajimi's uncle is a wealthy

648 To the immediate west of the Kanuri are the Hausas over whom
[101] the Kanuri once ruled. Signs of the early relationship between
[93] Hausa and Kanuri are still in evidence. The Hausa chief of Zinder, a large city in Niger north of Kano, still sent gifts to the Shehu of Bornu as a mark of allegiance upon being appointed to office by the French authorities. The Shehu in British Nigeria then sent him in return a ceremonial robe of office.

167 563 177 The Fulani have continued to infiltrate into Bornu and are numerous in the western sections of the province. In similar fashion, the Shuwa Arabs have in recent times been moving into Bornu from the east. The Shuwa represent the westernmost penetration of the Arabic-speaking African peoples. They are found concentrated in the southeastern sections of Bornu, in
[437] the region of Bama and Dikwa. Both the Fulani and the Shuwa
[463] are semi-nomadic pastoralists, living in a partially symbiotic relation with the agricultural Kanuri.

177 3. The Resistant Groups.

The Cameroon highlands, sixty miles southeast of Bama, remain the outpost of pagan peoples. The people of the Gwoza hills, one of the last "unpacified" areas in all Nigeria, still continue to resist their Moslem neighbors of the plains, as they had throughout the slave raiding of the Bornu empire. Some seventy thousand people, comprising a number of tribes and speaking several languages, live in the secure isolation of their mountain stronghold, resisting equally the penetration

439 of advancing credit to middlemen who do the actual buying of the
413 nuts and hides. The entire peanut crop of an area is bought al-
442 most before it is planted. Textiles, manufactured in Japan or
[804] India, are the main items imported into the region and bought by the Kanuri. Additional items imported in quantity are enamelware bowls and dishes, salt, sugar, perfume, and numerous small items of Western manufacture. For those who can afford them, the trading companies sell battery-powered radios, sewing machines, bicycles, etc.

438 Trade, both external and internal, is a vital part of
439 Kanuri economy. Traders are numerous and often very wealthy.
452 Money is lent at interest, though this is forbidden by the Koran.
437 Goods are advanced on credit by European traders, and by Kanuri
441 traders as well. A Kanuri trader who has credit with a trading
[183] company will take 500 pounds' worth of cotton cloth, promising
[443] to pay off the amount in a month. He distributes the goods to ten men who work for him, or, more properly, are attached to him. They each take 50 pounds' worth of cloth to small markets in the bush. There they try to sell the goods directly or they may give the goods on credit to a local merchant who sells them. Slowly the cash returns to the original middleman, and ultimately to the original trading company, which then permits the middleman to take another batch of goods on credit. Conversely, a trading company may advance 500 pounds in cash to a middleman who promises to bring, in one month's time, 500 pounds' worth of peanuts. He distributes the cash to his people who then

437 452 441 go out to the farmers with cash advances for their crops. The farmer sells his crop to the man who has advanced cash to him. The nuts go to the middleman, who then brings them in bulk to the company which gave him the large cash advance much earlier. Sometimes he is unable to get the nuts, either because it has been a bad season, or because other buyers have bought them. Too often the money which has been advanced to him is long since spent. Occasionally a man who has taken a cash advance from one company to buy nuts sells the nuts which he has bought to another company which is offering a higher price. He will then return his original cash advance to the first company with his regrets.

Thus the concepts of cash and credit have become working parts of Kanuri culture. Individuals borrow cash in many different sorts of situations. Actual cash for paying a bride-price, or for buying a bicycle, is much less important than having sources of credit from whom one can borrow. A man who is a shrewd trader can increase his wealth rapidly in present-day Bornu, and a wealthy class of traders exists today whose members were poor villagers a generation ago. [556]

178 788 396 441 [554] An interesting consequence of the growth of a wealthy trading class is that among the Kanuri the bulk of those who take the pilgrimage to Mecca comes from this class. For centuries the title of Alhaji, given to one who undertakes the pilgrimage, has been a sign of piety, of holiness and personal sacrifice. The trip to Mecca was a difficult and expensive one,

433 great numbers. Buduwai farm and keep large herds of sheep,
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563 goats and cows in the brush countryside surrounding their vil-
563 lages. The Kwoyam are a nomadic herding people who keep only
233 cows. Culturally they are very close to the Kanuri; their
economy, however, is quite different. They live in a close
relationship with the settled agricultural Kanuri whom they
[437] otherwise resemble greatly. Pastoral Fulani and Shuwa Arabs,
on the other hand, have very little in common with the kanuri
agriculturalists, yet, like the Kwoyam, they live in symbiotic
interdependence with the agricultural Kanuri. The Fulani of
Bornu are semi-nomadic pastoralists who are the most north-
easterly extension of far-flung Fulani culture. The Shuwa
are an Arabic speaking people related to other such peoples
extending eastward to the Sudan. Fulani and Shuwa keep dif-
ferent breeds of cattle and subsist almost entirely on milk
[438] and milk products. They have very similar relations to the
sedentary Kanuri with whom they exchange dairy products for
439 grain and for the goods produced by Kanuri craftsmen. Be-
237 cause of the large numbers of cattle, sheep, and goats found
433 in Bornu Province, hides, sheep skins and goat skins are an
[442] important product for export. These are sold for cash to
Kanuri middlemen and are exported by the trading companies.
[434] They are another important source of revenue for the Kanuri.
ooo Lastly gum arabic, which is the base from which gum drops

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The Kanuri have long had markets and used money, but the use of money is limited to certain spheres of Kanuri culture. Money is used primarily as a medium for the exchange of goods. Its use has just begun to be extended to certain types of land, as noted above, but not all land can be freely bought and sold.

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Similarly, a man's labor is not usually hired according to Kanuri custom. Wealth, therefore, can be acquired through economic activities in the market, but the means for doing this are largely limited to the exchange of goods at a profit. A man cannot acquire greater wealth by using his previously acquired wealth to buy land, and then use the land which he has bought to further increase his wealth. Nor can he directly exploit the labor of other men by paying a cheap price for labor, and selling the products resulting from the labor of others at a profit.

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Labor, as explained in the section on the Kanuri household, is what one must do for one's household head; the head in return must provide for household members in various ways. Sheer accumulation of greater and greater wealth would not be possible, since the household head must constantly expend his resources to maintain his social position and to satisfy the expectations of the members of his household.

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Respect or prestige (Kanuri: barzəm or darəja) is a quality assigned to different positions in a society according to the cultural values of that society. Individuals of high prestige are expected to behave in certain ways, and failure to do

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439 There is some information on a copper trade which the Kanuri middlemen carried on between Darfur in the east and the Nupe area of the Niger river in the west.(1) Contacts with southern people although most often channelled through Kano were sometimes made directly in the trade carried
175 on for the much desired kola-nut. Finally, slavery was a specialized
567 trade from which political figures had a ready source of income. The slaves were often sold locally through middlemen although there was an eager market for them across the desert in Tripoli, Tunis and Cairo.

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436 Currency seems to have come rather late to Bornu as compared with some of the other Sudanese countries. Certainly the nobles and large traders knew of its use in the early 19th century, but the Kanuri peasant had not taken up the customs of currency use that were prevalent amongst his contemporaries in other places such as Kano and Zinder at the time. In the 1820's Clapperton noticed that it was not until he arrived at Katagum, on the way to Kano from Bornu, that cowrie shells were being used as currency. Although he did notice that rolls of cloth from native weavers could be used as currency in some of the Bornu markets.(2) By 1850 the rolls or strips of cloth (gaba'a)(3) were being slowly replaced in Bornu by the cowrie shell. Amongst the traders and the upper classes, both Maria Theresa and Spanish dollars were available for use as money and were even seen in limited use in the Kuka market in the 1850's. However Barth's most revealing passage in this respect tells of his difficulty in buying food from the rural peasants who came to market and refused to have anything to [437] do with the currency. In order to buy grain, it was necessary for Barth to change his M. T. dollars to cowries, then buy one or more kulu'u (men's robes) and then barter this item of clothing for the required cereal. That

(1) See Arkell, A.J. 1952
(2) Denham,D. and Clapperton H; op. cit. Clapperton's Journal, p.21.
(3) Barth, H; op. cit. Vol. II, p.311.

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[589] husbands. These women (sower) are sexually available to all men, and are given gifts and market money for the sexual privileges they grant. The typical adolescent male has his first sexual experiences with a woman older than himself. However, when he decides to marry he usually tries to find a woman of roughly his own or of a junior age group.

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885 First marriage marks the beginning of adult status for a
581 man. The event announces and enables a move towards semi-independence which is aided and abetted by the avoidance relation between his father and his wife, as well as by the subject-matter avoidance of his marriage in conversations with his parents. Furthermore, he now commands an independent source of cooked food, which he can use for hospitality and its return, whereas previously he was obliged to others for this service. Kanuri males consider this to be one of the most important reasons for getting married, especially at the lower ranks of society.

885 To understand the value placed on this function of marriage it must be
581 realized that men from about the age of fifteen or sixteen onwards like
264 to eat in the company of other men. Without a wife, a young man must
• 437 join a group of eaters one (or more) of whose wives prepare the food. For this privilege he is obligated to the food provider, an obligation which may include hoeing his farm, going on messages for him, helping him repair his compound, etc. With a wife a young man can return eating favours on the same terms, thus equating himself to his hosts and creating obligation (a) for return meals from men who have wives, and (b)
581 of a diffuse nature from men who have none. It will be shown later that a wife is also valued as a socio-economic asset in the determination of her husband's productive capacities.

583 Today, almost all men in rural areas, and many in the city,
434 derive some of the money for marriage from the cash crop. This determines

437 The discussion of marriage has served to illustrate
583 attitudes and behaviour within contractual relations in which goods and services are exchanged between persons and groups. Bridewealth is given by the man and his group of relatives and friends to the girl and her group. The closer the marriage is to being the woman's first, the more likely it is that her luwali (dispenser of marriage rights) and kin group take the bridewealth payments rather than the woman herself. (426) (571) Men borrow from relatives, friends, and superiors to obtain the money for marriage expenses. Thus a man's social relational network in Bornu is an important part of his capital reserve.

58 The Kanuri classify marriages into two major categories - virgin or first marriage (female speaking) and marriage with a woman who has been married before. Marriages are further subdivided on the basis of the kinds of relationships established by the wedding. The relationship between the man and woman may entail the seclusion of the wife within the compound (nyia kulle). This is not strictly an either/or category but rather a matter of degree, since all Kanuri men like to see their wives remain in the compound as much as possible. However, only the upper classes can afford to maintain and enforce such a relationship. The remaining categories can be regrouped under two headings. Firstly, there are marriages in which a man obtains a wife by virtue of his relationship to an extended household organization and its head. The household head uses his luwali role (and in some cases his influence over other luwali) to either strengthen or create obligatory relationships with other men. In some cases, these unions take the form of cousin marriages (nyia durbe). In others, they merely emphasize already existing superior/subordinate relationships, while in still others, they serve as the initiating circumstance for an attempt at such a relationship. As we have seen, gift marriage (nyia

443 Magumeri for the Sunday market. Kachella feels that these people are his
366 friends. On the other hand, although Kachella's market friends to the
572 north are known to and known by his market friends to the south, they are not "friends" to one another. Again, the friends to the south have their own friends farther south at markets which Kachella rarely visits. Thus market cycles are overlapping, interlocking networks of social and economic relations which vary for each market town.

443 Beside the interlocking cycle of local markets, each town
366 and/or cycle has some kind of link with a larger center of the export-
439 import trade, the two largest being Maiduguri in the south, and Nguru
[437] (the rail head) in the extreme northwest of the Emirate. Traditionally trading caravans set out from Maiduguri once every two weeks for remote market towns. Although less important today, these can still be
[494] seen. If there are roads, lorries bring people and goods from the larger centres early on market day and return at night or the next day with rural purchasers and travellers returning to or visiting the large urban centre.

443 One of the chief features resulting from this system of
366 distribution is that markets on motor roads assume primary importance
494 while those back in the bush are becoming secondary, and are less well attended. However, the interlocking nature of the rural market cycles makes for ease of communication and distribution in the region as a whole, and this is accentuated by the direct links with the centre and the modern use of lorries as the primary means of transport.

366 The relation between market towns and population size is
494 indirect. Very few market towns in Bornu have population aggregates
161 of under one thousand, while the presence of a market and, more im-
[162] portantly, a motor road tend to stimulate population growth. Thus pop-

443 pushed down by a nonchalant buyer with an anxious seller whose sales
435 for that day have been low.

This above description has exaggerated the price fluctuations to some extent. With many items, prices hold as constants for long periods and become an institutionalized part of the market. Thus a box of sugar cubes is one shilling and only very rarely did this price ever
443 vary in the entire period of the field work. Even with prices that did
435 vary, it is the writer's opinion that European travellers and commenta-
437 tors on Africa have overstressed the haggling up and down variability of prices in African markets because of their own experiences. Certainly, market sellers like to haggle over price and do so with all the enjoy-
[609] ment of the hardened poker player bluffing at cards. However, only to
[829] the European, who is conceived of as infinitely wealthy, do prices range so widely. When the writer attended his first markets, sellers haggled wildly and prices ranged enormously to him and to his wife. However, with time, the "real" prices were learned and the range within which
[609] haggling could take place narrowed significantly. If the writer then attended a new market where he was unknown, except as a European, then the range widened again and sometimes the seller would refuse to come anywhere near the "real" price claiming in Kanuri to his associates and the world in general that a European should pay more than an African. Friends always instructed the writer on the "real" price, telling him not to allow a price to be raised simply because he was a European. This "real" price is something which can be easily overlooked in an open market where haggling is the format of the buyer-seller relationship. Bartering may range widely or narrowly, but the experienced buyer and seller both know quite well, within a very small margin, where the final price will be set. This is why the really tenacious bartering comes at

443 the very end of the haggling. Thus it may take only two or three min-
435 utes to narrow a seller down from fifteen shillings to something a-
437 round five; but will it be 5/6d or 4/6d; 4/9d or 5/3d; or 5/- even? -
this last seesaw in pricing may take fifteen or twenty minutes. For although norms of price may be set for market day or longer on any commodity, there is always a small range of a few pennies around the norm which can be called the "real" price. This is not a single price, but really a range within which serious haggling takes place.

435 221 Finally, it should be noted that price in Bornu vary with the seasons. In general, the harvest period from November to the end of December is a time of plenty, while July and August, the growing season, is a time of shortage. Prices on all commodities, except food, fall during the wet season when incomes are at their lowest and men are taking time off from their dry season activity to tend their fields. They then rise around the harvests when cash crops are sold and money is more plentiful. Thus the Maria Theresa dollar can be bought for 6/9d to 7/- in July, but goes up as high 8/- to 9/- in November after the [262] harvests. Food is scarce during the wet season, surplus sellers are short (some even stop selling) and prices of bulk (per 200 lbs. bag) rise when other prices are falling. Similarly when other commodities are rising in price after the harvest, food, which is plentiful, falls in value.

The Organization of Trade

443 At the local level in Bornu, trade is handled by retailers. Under this heading come sellers of food items, cooked and uncooked foods, sundries, medicine, charms, medical services, builders, etc. With one